Barbora Šohájková has decided to evaluate the more recent aspects of the special relationship between the United States and Great Britain. This topic has been analyzed widely by numerous scholars, but there is always room for new perspectives. Jana Sehnálková has obviously performed her task as Barbora’s supervisor well. The work reads well and is the product of meticulous research.

This dissertation contains an introduction (Chapter 1), five main chapters (Chapters 2-6), and a conclusion (Chapter 7). There are several tables and graphs and the work is summarized in English for the non-Czech speaker. I am very pleased with the consistent referencing and the wide array of sources consulted. Barbora belongs to the modern generation that readily utilizes the internet.

The introduction clearly defines the aim of the work and informs the reader of the background of the “special relationship.” Barbora states that her focus is primarily on the relationship between George W. Bush and Tony Blair between 2001 and 2008. The structure of the dissertation is explained and the literature is evaluated in detail.

Chapter 2 evaluates the evolution of the special relationship from its inception at the end of the Second World War until the end of the Cold War. Special emphasis is placed on the Reagan-Thatcher bond throughout the 1980s, which resurrected the special relationship after a brief decline in the 1970s. This historical background is quite useful.
Chapter 3 deals with the special relationship in the last decade of the twentieth century. Indeed, the 1990s represented the first post-Cold War decade. There would be new national security challenges for both Britain and the United States, which would test, yet affirm the special relationship. After the defeat of George Bush, Sr. in 1992, Bill Clinton became the U.S. president and his relations with Conservative prime minister, John Major, were not easy. Nonetheless, the special relationship was not seriously affected. Labour’s ascent to power in the U.K. under the charismatic Tony Blair in 1997, however, ushered in a new era of positive transatlantic relations. Clinton’s relationship with Blair was excellent. This chapter is basically flawless.

Chapter 4 represents an analysis of the relationship between Tony Blair and George W. Bush after 2000. Tony Blair managed to continue the special relationship and have cordial relations with George W. Bush in the face of new terrorist threats to both countries. The key here was 9/11. Britain immediately stood together with the United States and Blair thus established a close relationship with Bush.

Chapter 5 discusses the post-9/11 aftermath, the decision to invade Afghanistan and the road to war in Iraq. Tony Blair proved himself to be an unflinching ally of America in its desire to attack Iraq despite major international opposition. Propagating the war on terrorism was essential and the hawkish stance of both Bush and Blair indeed proved similar to the Churchill and Thatcher years. Tony Blair was the one who proved flexible skillful here.

Chapter 6 is devoted to American-British relationship between 2003 and 2008. Obviously, this period was dominated by both countries’ involvement in Iraq and
later the beginning of the end of Tony Blair. Blair’s successor, Gordon Brown, initially had a frostier relationship with Bush, but, the special relationship remained intact.

In the conclusion, Barbora recapitulates her main points and argues that she has confirmed her hypothesis that Tony Blair was largely responsible for the quality of the special relationship between 2001 and 2008. I think the work speaks for itself.

Barbora Šohájková has produced a basically flawless M.A. dissertation. Her work should stand as an example to future students. I recommend an **excellent mark** and a **dean’s commendation**.

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